

Discovering Coffee With A Cop Day

NationalDayClassroom.com

National Coffee With A Cop Day is a special observance dedicated to building stronger relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Here is a bit of its history and purpose:

History

- **The Beginning:** The idea started small in **2011** with the **Hawthorne Police Department in Hawthorne, California**. Police officers were looking for a better, more relaxed way to talk with residents than the usual formal town-hall meetings.
- **A Simple Idea:** They decided to host a casual gathering at a local McDonald's where officers and community members could simply talk over a cup of coffee. The idea was to have **no agenda, no speeches, and no barriers**, just honest conversation.
- **Spreading the Word:** The idea was a huge success and quickly spread to other police agencies across the country.
- **National Day Established:** In **2016**, with encouragement from the Department of Justice, the first **National Coffee With A Cop Day** was established. It is now celebrated every year on the **first Wednesday in October**.

Purpose

The main goals of National Coffee With A Cop Day are:

1. **Breaking Down Barriers:** It provides a neutral, relaxed setting (like a coffee shop) where the uniform and badge don't feel as intimidating. This helps citizens see the police officer as a person—a neighbor, a parent, or a friend.
2. **Building Trust:** By having one-on-one, casual conversations, officers and residents can get to know each other personally, which helps build trust and cooperation in the community.
3. **Open Communication:** It gives community members a chance to ask questions, voice concerns about their neighborhood, or just learn more about police work without waiting for an emergency or formal meeting.
4. **Community Policing:** It's an example of "community policing," a philosophy that focuses on police and community working together to solve problems and prevent crime. By understanding the community's needs, officers can serve them better.

In short, it's a day that proves a simple cup of coffee can lead to stronger, safer, and more connected communities!

Here are a few writing prompts about [National Coffee With A Cop Day](#) for your classroom, broken down by type:

Creative & Story Prompts

1. **A Seat at the Table:** Imagine you are at a "Coffee With A Cop" event. You decide to sit down with an officer and start a conversation. What do you talk about? Write a short script or story of this conversation. Be sure to include what you learn about the officer and what the officer learns about your community.
2. **The Unexpected Meeting:** An officer is enjoying a donut and coffee when a young person walks up with a question. The question isn't about a crime; it's about what the officer does for fun, or what the hardest part of their job is. Write a narrative detailing this unexpected, casual conversation.
3. **A Day in the Life:** Write a story from the perspective of a police officer who is participating in their first "Coffee With A Cop" event. What are their hopes and fears for the day? What is the most memorable interaction they have?

Opinion & Persuasive Prompts

1. **More Than a Meeting:** In your own words, explain why simply sitting down for a casual conversation is a more effective way to build trust than a formal town hall meeting with speeches and presentations.
2. **Community Impact:** Do you think "Coffee With A Cop" events are a good use of a police officer's time? Write a short essay arguing your position, providing at least two reasons why this kind of event is valuable (or not valuable) for the community.
3. **What's Next?:** If you could create a similar, non-police-related event to help a different group (like teachers, firefighters, or local government officials) connect better with the community, what would it be called, and how would it work? Explain your new event's purpose.

Reflection & Informational Prompts

1. **The Goal:** The core objective of National Coffee With A Cop Day is to "break down barriers." What does the word "**barrier**" mean in this context? Describe a specific example of a barrier that this event is designed to remove.
 2. **My Idea for a Safer Community:** Think about your neighborhood or school. If you had the chance to speak with a police officer one-on-one, what is one non-emergency issue or idea you would bring up to help make your area better or safer?
 3. **Research and Report:** Research a police department in your state (or even your own town) to find out if they host "Coffee With A Cop" events. Write a brief report detailing when and where they hold them and why the local police chief believes these events are important.
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